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# INDOT 2030 Long Range Plan

## Corridor Planning Studies

### Overview

The statewide transportation plan provides an integrated planning process starting with an outreach program for public and key transportation stakeholder involvement and the development of policy guidance. These activities flow into the systems level planning activities which provide for the evaluation of system performance, the identification of system deficiencies and needs, and the sizing of potential improvement concepts relative to the assessment of financial resources and plan development objectives. The key element in making the transition from the system planning activities to the project development / programming process is the corridor planning process. This chapter outlines the corridor planning studies undertaken and anticipated to be conducted by INDOT as part of the statewide plan development process.

### Major Corridor Investment Study (Commerce Corridors)

In 1991, the Indiana General Assembly passed legislation that directed INDOT to establish “commerce corridors” in the state. These corridors were defined as, “...that part of a recognized system of highways that: (1) directly facilitates intrastate, interstate, or international commerce and travel, (2) enhances economic vitality and international competitiveness, or (3) provides service to all parts of Indiana and the United States.”

In the 1995 Statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan, *Transportation in Indiana*, a system of Commerce Corridors was defined. Several of these corridors were identified for further study either by direction of the legislature or by the findings of the 1995 Statewide Plan. Following the adoption of the 1995 statewide plan, INDOT began work on the Major Corridor Investment Benefit Analysis System (MCIBAS). Three corridor studies were included in this overall system, US 31, SR 26 / US 35, and the Southwest Indiana Highway.

#### US 31 – Indianapolis to South Bend

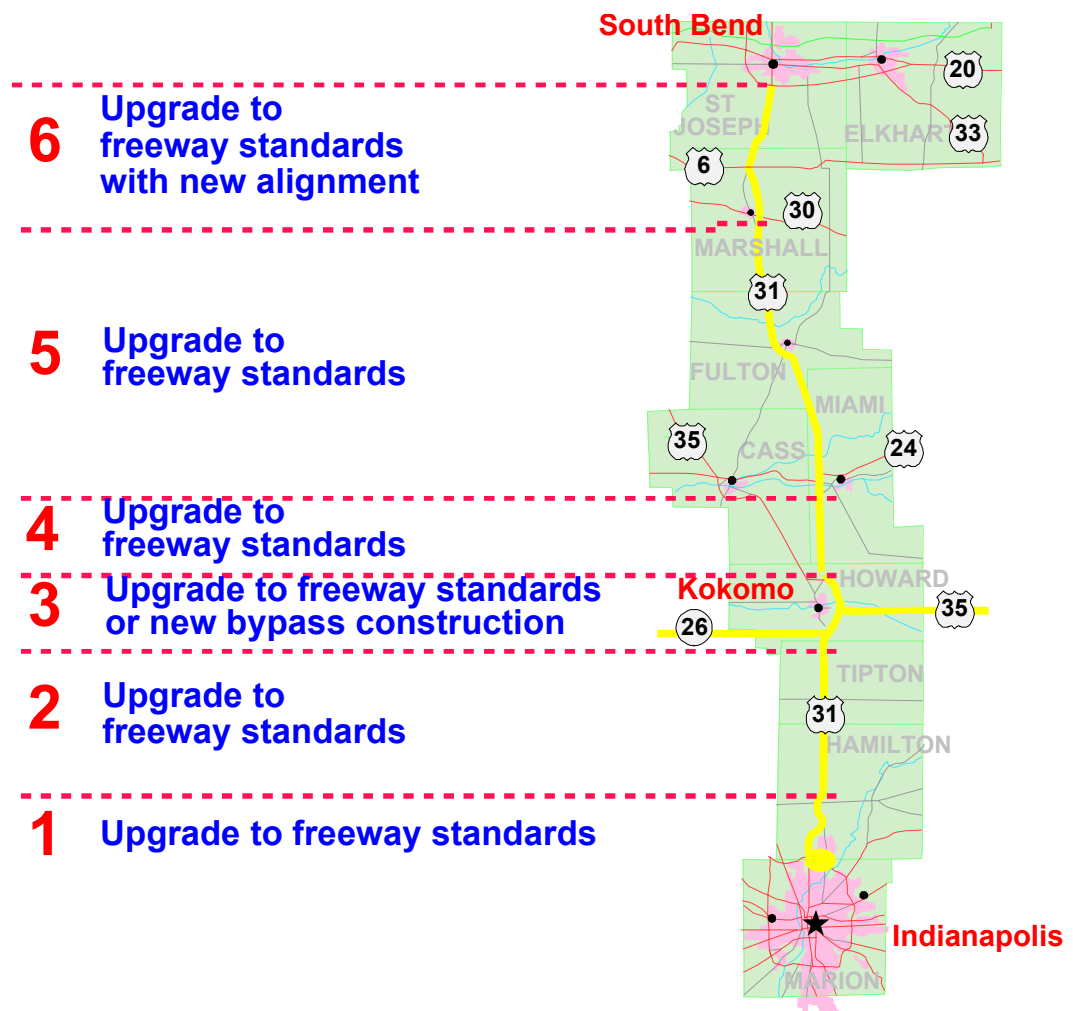
The US 31 study was completed in 1998 to evaluate the costs and benefits, including the economic development impacts, associated with an improved inter-city highway facility. The MCIBAS study process provided for analysis of major inter-city travel demand needs in a cost/benefit frame which allows the evaluation of local and private investment in economic development activities. The US 31 corridor extends from I-465 at Indianapolis to US 20 at South Bend, a distance of 122 miles. US 31 is a four-lane divided highway with varying degrees of access control depending on the roadway location.

Concentrations of traffic signals and access points reduce the carrying capacity of the roadway in Hamilton County and in Kokomo in Howard County. Traffic forecasts projected an increase in vehicle miles of travel carried by US 31 by 60% by the year 2020 with average speed dropping by 9% if no improvements are made.

The US 31 study evaluated the potential improvement of the corridor to freeway standards, including total access control, 2 or more lanes in each direction, and posted speeds of 55 mph in urban and 65 mph in rural areas. The study estimated an improvement cost of \$0.9 billion (discounted). The freeway upgrade average free-flow speed would increase from 50 mph to 60 mph resulting in a decrease of Indianapolis to South Bend travel time of 35 minutes when accounting for the elimination of traffic signals. In evaluating the travel time savings, lower vehicle operating cost, and reduced accident costs an overall \$1.5 billion in user cost savings were identified.

Figure 7-1

US 31 Improvement Concept



The economic evaluation found the freeway upgrade would increase the market area for businesses along the US 31 corridor and improve travel conditions thereby lowering the cost of transportation. The improved transportation access was estimated to attract approximately 200 new jobs in the industries of motor vehicles and parts, metal products,

rubber and plastics, electrical equipment, and retail trade. Overall, \$1.3 billion in economic impacts were identified over the analysis period.

The overall US 31 freeway upgrade project was found to have discounted benefits of \$2.9 billion and costs of \$0.9 billion resulting in a net benefit of \$2.0 billion.

## SR 26 / US 35 – Lafayette to I-69

The SR 26 / US 35 corridor serves east-west travel needs between I-65 and I-69 in north central Indiana. The communities of Lafayette, Rossville, Russiaville, Kokomo, Greentown, Jonesboro, and Gas City are directly served by the route, with the communities of Frankfort, Tipton, Elwood, Alexandria, and Marion being located close by. The corridor is 67 miles in length, with SR 26 and US 35 each making up about one-half of the length. SR 26 is a 2-lane road with unrestricted access and narrow shoulders. US 35 is also a 2-lane roadway, but has wider shoulders and was recently resurfaced. Travel as measured by vehicle miles of travel is forecasted to increase 43% by the year 2020 and travel speed is anticipated to decrease slightly from 45 to 43 mph.

The 1998 study suggested that the SR 26 / US 35 route be upgraded to a high level two lane roadway. In the vicinity of Lafayette and Kokomo where traffic volumes are higher due to urban development, short segments of 4-lane roadways would be constructed. The estimated cost of the highway improvements is \$123 million (\$93 million if discounted). The improvements would result in an increase in travel speeds creating travel time savings, lower accident rate costs, and vehicle operating reductions accounting for \$197 million in discounted user costs.

The economic evaluation found the 2-lane upgrade would increase the market area for businesses along the SR 26 / US 35 corridor and improve travel conditions thereby lowering the cost of transportation for businesses. The improved transportation access was estimated to increase employment in several industries including services, trades, and manufacturing. Overall, \$140 million in economic impacts were identified over the analysis period.

The overall SR26 / US35 corridor 2-lane upgrade project was found to have discounted benefits of \$343 million and costs of \$93 million resulting in a net benefit of \$250 million.

## Southwest Indiana Highway – Evansville to Bloomington DEIS

An important element of an Environmental Impact Statement is an analysis of the economic impacts of the proposed improvement. While the traditional user benefits and costs were studied, an additional macroeconomic analysis took place as part of this study. This economic analysis included identification of benefits related to business expansion, business attraction, and tourism generated by the proposed improvement. The analysis indicated that the highway would enhance the attractiveness of Southwest Indiana for businesses looking for new locations, increase business expansions, and make the region more attractive to tourists by improving access to existing tourist attractions. This information was included in the approved Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Southwest Indiana Highway, which at the time was from I-64/164 at Evansville to SR 37 at Bloomington. This study was completed in 1996.

As a result of public input, a wide range of corridors are currently being analyzed as part of a larger Environmental Impact Statement covering the area from Evansville to

Indianapolis. Similar economic analysis activities will take place in this study. This corridor is now also known as I-69.

## US 31 – Major Investment Studies

The Indiana General Assembly mandated INDOT to conduct the appropriate studies to improve traffic flow on US 31 from Indianapolis to South Bend.

### Hamilton County

One of three Major Investment Studies conducted in three important areas of this corridor was in Hamilton County from I-465 to north of Westfield. This study was completed in 1997.

The recommendation from this MIS was to improve the existing US 31 corridor to a freeway from I-465 to 196th Street. In 1998, the proposed project was placed into INDOT's programmed schedule of roadway improvements, including an extension northward to SR 38. The required environmental study is currently underway. The total project cost of this proposed improvement is approximately \$450 million.

### Kokomo/Howard County

One of three Major Investment Studies conducted in three important areas of this corridor was in Howard County. This study was completed in 1995.

The recommendation from this MIS was to improve the existing US 31 corridor to a freeway from SR 26 to the north junction with US 35. The recommendation was initially accepted by all governmental agencies involved. Opposition to the recommendation by some local residents and businesses resulted in all local government agencies supporting a new alignment freeway. The local Metropolitan Planning Organization recently completed its long-range plan update that included direction on local preferences regarding US 31 (an eastern relocation of US 31). INDOT intends to place the proposed project into the programmed schedule of roadway improvements and conduct the required environmental study beginning in early 2002. The total project cost approaches \$130 million.

### Plymouth to South Bend

One of three Major Investment Studies conducted in three important areas of this corridor was in Marshall and St. Joseph Counties from US 30 at Plymouth to US 20 at South Bend. This study was completed in 1998.

The MIS identified a preferred alternative (Western Alternative-Option 1) to be constructed as a freeway. This alternative upgrades the existing US 31 alignment to a freeway from US 30 to approximately two miles south of US 6. There, the freeway goes east of existing US 31 (bypassing Lapaz to the east), crosses existing US 31 south of Lakeville, and then stays west of existing US 31 up to US 20. In 1999, this proposed project was placed into INDOT's programmed schedule of roadway improvements. The study also recommended that three other build alternatives be advanced to the environmental phase of study (Western Alternative-Option 2, Upgrade, and Near East). The required environmental documentation phase is just beginning. The total project cost of this proposed improvement is near \$170 million.

## US 31 Corridor Study – Indianapolis to South Bend

The Indiana General Assembly mandated the Indiana Transportation Finance Authority to conduct a study of the need for and feasibility of constructing a new toll road from Indianapolis to South Bend. This study was done in conjunction with INDOT and was completed in 1999.

The study concluded that anticipated toll revenues would not be sufficient to pay the costs associated with the design, construction, maintenance and operating expenses, and meeting debt service requirements of the roadway.

## SR 25 – Lafayette to Logansport Major Investment Study

SR 25 from Lafayette to Logansport is the westernmost segment of the US 24 / SR 25 Hoosier Heartland Corridor from Lafayette to Fort Wayne. Construction of the remaining segments from Logansport to Fort Wayne is either completed or nearing completion as a four lane divided highway. Furthermore, the Hoosier Heartland Corridor is a major portion of a larger corridor from Lafayette to Toledo, Ohio that the United States Congress identified as a High Priority Corridor on the National Highway System.

This study was completed in 1995. The recommendation from this MIS was to construct a relocated SR 25 as a four lane divided partial access control highway south of its existing alignment. The proposed project was placed into INDOT's programmed schedule of roadway improvements in 1998 and 1999. The required environmental documentation study is currently underway. The total project cost of this proposed improvement is \$200 million.

## Ohio River Major Investment Study

The Ohio River Major Investment Study (ORMIS) was initiated to address the problems of current and future travel mobility across the Ohio River between Kentucky and Indiana in the Louisville region. This issue had been addressed in several prior studies, without resolution. In fall 1994, an impasse was reached on the most recent prior study, which was begun in 1992. On October 28, 1993, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) published a new rule on statewide and metropolitan planning that contained requirement for Major Investment Studies.

The purpose of the ORMIS was to bring the stakeholders of the region together through a process of defining and analyzing possible alternatives to result in a preferred strategy for investment in a solution. The study was conducted under the sponsorship of the Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA), the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region. An Advisory committee, The Ohio River Major Investment Study Committee, was established to guide the study. The ORMIS Committee was appointed by and responsible to the KIPDA Policy Committee (TPC), the official decision-making body for the ORMIS.

The ORMIS was completed in November 1996 and its recommendations were unanimously approved by the KIPDA Transportation Policy Committee on December 19, 1996. The recommendations called for four elements: Alternative A (the downtown

bridge, with a full rebuild of the Kennedy Interchange (I-64, I-65, and I-71) plus the East End Bridge); bus-oriented transit improvements: short term traffic operational improvements; and a regional financial summit to deal with funding needs. As part of the two-bridge solution, the middle alignment was recommended for the East End Bridge, and the upstream alignment was recommended for the Downtown Bridge. Specific improvements for promoting transit and other alternative modes of travel also were recommended, supporting the intent of ISTEA. The costs of these recommendations were over \$700 million. The required environmental study for this project is currently underway.

## Northwest Indiana Major Investment Study

In the spring of 1998, INDOT commissioned the Northwest Indiana Major Investment Study. The purpose of the study was to document the need for, and make recommendations for, improvements to state transportation facilities in the region over the next 20 years.

Special attention was focused on the two Interstate highways in the region that experience the highest levels of congestion. I-65 between US 30 and I-80/94, and I-80/94 (the Kingery Expressway in Illinois and the Borman Expressway in Indiana) between the I-94 / I-294 / Illinois Route 394 interchange and I-65 were studied intensively to determine the best alternatives to relieve congestion and improve public safety.

The final study recommendations included:

- Expand I-65 to 6 lanes between US 30 and I-80/94
- Expand I-80/94 to 8 basic lanes between the Illinois State Line and I-65 (in cooperation with Illinois)
- Indiana Toll Road should proceed with preliminary development studies of Western Extension

## I-69 Fort Wayne Major Investment Study

In 1998, INDOT joined the Fort Wayne MPO in the study for transportation solutions to mobility problems in the Northwestern area of the metropolitan Fort Wayne area. The *Major Investment Study* evaluated congestion problems on I-69 in Fort Wayne along with several major local roadways. Improvement alternatives ranged from a no-build option, to local road expansion, transit route expansion, and added lanes on I-69. The final recommendations from the study confirmed the need for local road improvements, transit system upgrades, and added travel lanes on I-69 from US 24 to I-469 (north junction). This latter improvement on I-69 is programmed.

## Indianapolis Northeast ConNECTIONS MIS / DEIS

In 1998, INDOT joined the Indianapolis MPO in the study for transportation solutions to mobility problems in the Northeast Corridor of the metropolitan Indianapolis area. The transportation planning study entitled *ConNECTIONS* is a Major Investment Study and a

Draft Environment Impact Statement for a range of potential transportation improvements. The *ConNECTions* study is evaluating congestion problems on several highways in the northeast including, I-465, I-69, SR 37, and I-70. In addition, the potential for several public transportation options including light rail and commuter rail from downtown Indianapolis to Noblesville is being investigated. Several improvement concepts for highway added capacity projects are under consideration. The *ConNECTions* DEIS was completed in late 2001. The Final EIS was published in late 2003. A Record of Decision was published in early 2004.

## US 231 Corridor Study – Dubois County

The 1990 Southwest Indiana Highway Feasibility Study recommended further study of a relocation of US 231 around Jasper and Huntingburg to provide economic benefits and enhance the transportation network in these regional employment centers. The proposed project was placed into INDOT's programmed schedule of roadway improvements in 1990. This study was completed in 1996.

The main goal of the study was to identify and evaluate alternatives that would improve traffic flow and increase traffic carrying capacity along US 231 in the study area. Relocation of US 231 and internal improvements to the state and local street networks were analyzed, with a relocation of US 231 to the west of Huntingburg and the east of Jasper recommended. The recommendation ultimately calls for a four lane divided highway with full access control, but with improvements made in stages. Stage One calls for implementing two of the four lanes in the right-of-way for the future four lanes. Stage One adequately serves the projected traffic volumes in 2025. The total project cost of Stage One is \$75 million. The required environmental documentation study is nearing completion. The total project cost for all three phases is \$152 million.

## US 24 Feasibility Study – Fort Wayne to Toledo, Ohio

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 identified 21 High Priority Corridors on the National Highway System. One of corridors is US 24 from Fort Wayne to Toledo, Ohio. The Ohio Department of Transportation was the lead agency on this bi-state study. This feasibility study examined and documented the deficiencies of the existing US 24, identified the tasks and issues associated with the development process for the improvement of US 24, developed reasonable time frames for these tasks, estimated the total costs of improvements, and evaluated the current economic climate of the US 24 corridor as well as the economic impacts of upgrading the corridor.

The study was completed in 1994 and recommended upgrading US 24 to a four lane facility. The corridor was prioritized into three planning sections. Priority One is from Napoleon, Ohio to Toledo (Interstate 475), followed by Priority Two from Defiance, Ohio to Napoleon, and then Priority Three from Fort Wayne (Interstate 469) to Defiance. The total project cost is approximately \$400 million to \$460 million depending upon location of the improvement.

## Indiana Interstate Interchange Study

Completed in 2001, the *Indiana Interstate Interchange Planning Study* identifies a program of interchange modification and new interchange construction projects. The final report recommendations include a prioritized list of improvements and associated estimated costs per interchange. The report's recommendations will drive our interchange modification and new interchange construction program for the next 5 to 7 years and beyond. This study updated the previous Interstate Interchange Evaluation Study, undertaken by INDOT in the late 1980s. The 2001 interchange study developed improvement recommendations and priorities for the 244 existing interchanges on the Interstate System, and evaluated the feasibility and need for 11 new interchange locations. The recommendations of this interchange study will provide the foundation for the interchange improvement program in terms of interchange modifications and new interchange development. Additional information may be found in Chapter 9.

## Indiana Streamlined EIS and Corridor/EA Procedures

In 2001, INDOT and FHWA released new streamlined procedures for environmental study to establish a coordinated planning development process. These procedures are intended to address projects being developed under the *National Environmental Protection Act* (NEPA) which may require preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) but begin with the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) as a corridor planning study.

The new procedures were implemented to avoid the duplication of planning and public involvement activities between Major Investment Studies (MIS) and following project development studies conducted under the NEPA requirements. In several corridor planning studies, negative comments were received because controversial alternatives that study participants believed had been eliminated were re-evaluated when the NEPA "decision-making" process was initiated.

### Basic Elements:

1. Establish a project coordination team to provide policy guidance to the development of a study.
2. Issue an early coordination letter to resource agencies, notifying them that FHWA is initiating a NEPA decision making process.
3. Establish two key coordinating points with resource agencies.
  - A). Purpose and Need and Preliminary Alternatives
  - B). Preliminary Alternative Analysis and Screening
4. At each key coordinating point, an Agency Review Package will be prepared and submitted to the resource agencies to initiate a sixty-day Interagency review process. An Interagency Review meeting will be held thirty-days into the review period.
5. Complete DEIS (or EA/Corridor Study). The EA/Corridor Study will conclude that each study does or does not involve significant impacts. The EA/Corridor will identify for



each segment of independent utility the purpose and need, and the preliminary alternatives retained for further study.

6. Transition of an EA/Corridor Study to an EIS. If FHWA determines that a project has significant impacts, a decision will be made to move forward with preparation of an EIS. Initially, more detailed studies will be conducted to prepare a DEIS. A coordination point with resource agencies will be established for review of the Preferred Alternatives and Mitigation. This will involve the preparation of an Agency Review Package and submittal to the resource agencies to initiate a sixty-day Inter-agency review process. An Interagency Review meeting will be held thirty days into the review period.
7. Complete the Final Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision.

A detailed description of the Indiana Streamlined EIS and Corridor/EA Procedures is available on the FHWA's Indiana Division website at:  
<http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/indiv/eisproc.htm>.

## Corridor Studies

Since 2000, seven corridor studies have been initiated to address Commerce Corridor issues from the 1995 plan, investigate potential roadway improvements identified from needs analysis, and respond to Congressional mandates. Three of these studies have been completed. The studies' recommendations will be incorporated into the statewide plan as stated below.

### US 231 Corridor I-65 to I-70 Improvement Study

The US 231 corridor runs about 70 miles from I-70 in Putnam County, through Montgomery County to I-65 in Tippecanoe County. This route provides a north-south two lane principal arterial serving west-central Indiana. In the development of the Indiana portion of the original National Highway System (NHS), US 231 between I-74 and I-70 was evaluated to be included in the system but was eliminated in interests of minimizing system mileage. The 2002 NHS update effort, however, included a reexamination of this US 231 segment, resulting in addition of the segment to the Indiana portion of the NHS. This portion of US 231 has also been designated as a Statewide Mobility Corridor.

INDOT conducted a corridor feasibility study to establish the need to improve US 231 and make recommendations for roadway improvement projects if warranted. Key issues studied included: (1) the connection needs between SR 26 and I-65 in the Lafayette area including the current EIS between SR 26 and US 52, (2) examination of the needs for bypasses of Greencastle and Crawfordsville to address potential through truck and passenger car traffic in congested downtown areas, and (3) analysis of basic improvement plans for upgrading the roadway to four lanes and consider roadway relocation alternatives.

The Study was completed in March, 2003. It recommended a series of improvements to the US-231 Corridor including construction of a bypass of Greencastle and a potential bypass of Crawfordsville when traffic volumes warrant it. The Study identified eleven segments of independent utility requiring additional environmental analysis to refine the Study's recommendations. INDOT is currently conducting an environmental impact study on the priority segment of U.S. 231 in Greencastle as recommended by this study.

## SR 101 Corridor Improvement Study

The enhancement of transportation in Southeastern Indiana has been a long-term concern of INDOT. In 1991, a joint resolution of the Indiana General Assembly urged the extension of SR 101 through Switzerland County to US 50 to improve north-south travel within the region. Preliminary INDOT studies indicated a new SR 101 extension would not be cost effective.

In the development of the Major Corridor Investment Benefit Analysis System (MCIBAS) study process, consideration of the economic development impacts of improved highway access was combined into the traditional user cost/benefit analysis system. Since the early 1990s, several changes have occurred in Southeastern Indiana which affected the region's potential for economic development. These include: (1) the growth of the suburban Cincinnati region and its impact on Dearborn County, (2) the expansion of the tourism economy, and (3) major shifts in the multi-state economy due to the expansion of automobile related industries in Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio.

The INDOT corridor study was intended to identify and evaluate transportation improvements in a north-south corridor between the Markland Dam on the Ohio River in Switzerland County and I-74 in Dearborn and Ripley Counties. The evaluation of corridor improvement alternatives included:

1. User benefits such as travel time savings, lower vehicle operating costs, and reduced accident rates.
2. Economic impacts from improved highway access considering the expansion of existing businesses, the attraction of new businesses, and the attraction of new tourism activity.

The study was completed in 2003. The study determined that Alternative 3B performed the best in meeting the purpose and need and should be implemented in three phases:

**Phase 1:** Identify specific locations with significant traffic operational and safety problems in Switzerland and Ohio Counties, and apply low-cost TSM-type operational improvements. Priority roadways should be SR 56 and SR 156.

**Phase 2:** Design and construct the southern portion of Alternative 3B between Markland Dam and U.S. 50.

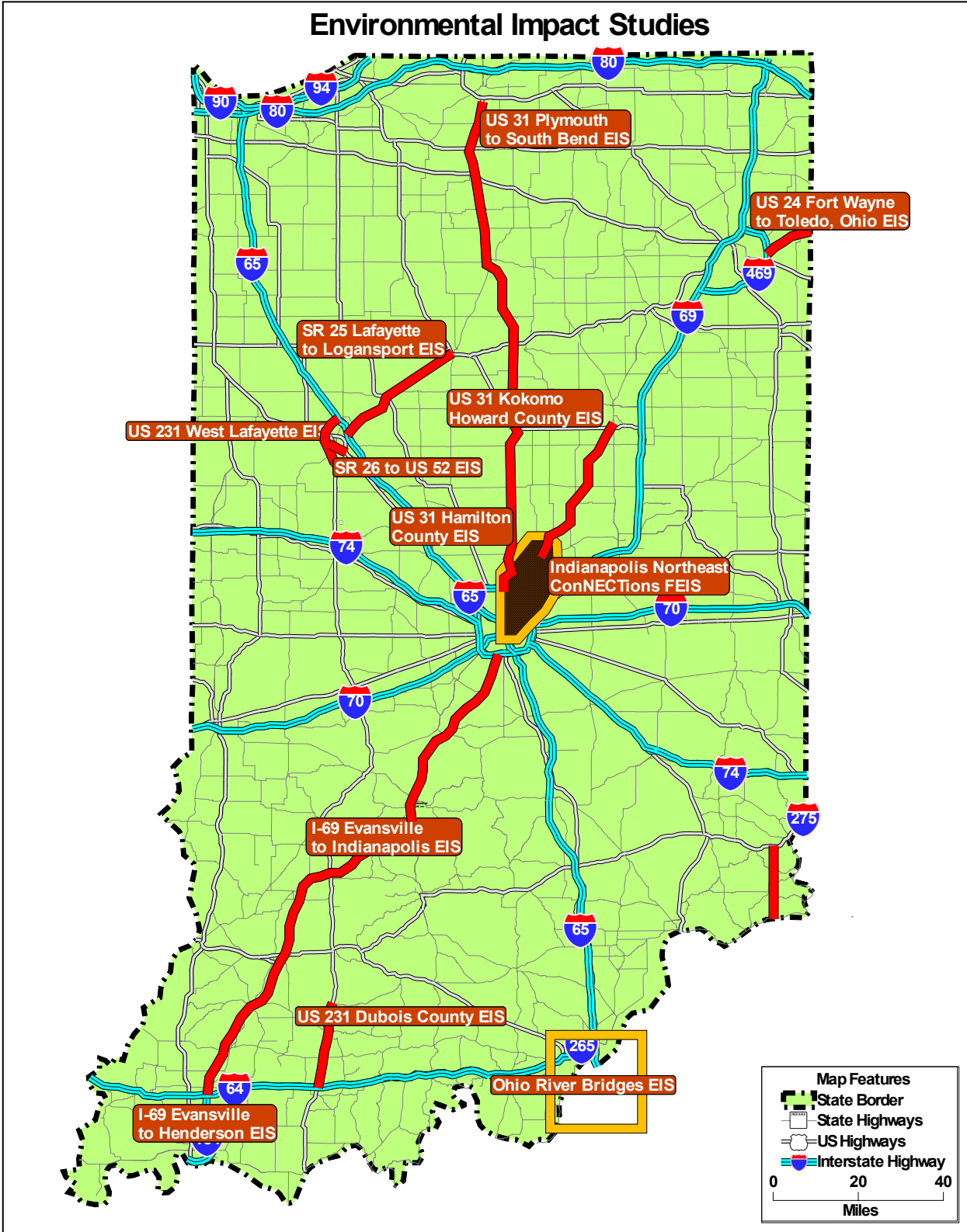
**Phase 3:** Design and construct the northern portion of Alternative 3B from U.S. 50 to I-74.

In reviewing the SR 101 Corridor Planning/Environmental Assessment Study and the comments received from the reviewing agencies, transportation stakeholders and the public, it is INDOT's decision not to include a new alignment SR 101 project connecting I-74 and the Markland Dam in the new 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan.

## State Road 62 Lloyd Expressway Corridor Planning Study

The SR 62 Lloyd Expressway Corridor Planning Study evaluated the 5.5 mile corridor of the Lloyd Expressway from Eichoff Road (University of Southern Indiana entrance) to Fulton Avenue on the West Side of Evansville. The potential for upgrading the corridor to freeway standards was examined. In December, 2002, a decision was made based upon the preliminary findings to upgrade the corridor to a freeway facility. The study was converted to an environmental assessment and project development was begun.

Figure 7-2



## Active Corridor Studies

Of the seven corridor studies initiated since 2000, four are still active. As seen below, all of these studies are nearing completion. Once finished, the studies' recommendations will be reviewed by INDOT for incorporation into the statewide plan in future updates.

### SR 9 Greenfield Corridor Improvement Study

SR 9 in Greenfield experiences significant traffic congestion. The SR 9 study corridor has been initially established from US 52 to SR 234. In the 1998 TEA-21 legislation, a project to "Construct a SR 9 Bypass in Greenfield" was included as part of the Section 1602 Program for High Priority Demonstration Projects. The INDOT corridor feasibility study was intended to establish the essential need for improvements on SR 9, analyze basic improvement plans, and make recommendations to INDOT for the programming of improvement projects (if warranted). The study conducted an origin-destination traffic study to measure through-traffic patterns.

The study has completed its analysis of the various improvement alternatives. Public meetings are expected to be held in November, 2004 to present the study recommendations. The study is scheduled for completion by the end of 2004.

### SR 37 Noblesville to Marion Corridor Improvement Study

SR 37 from Noblesville in Hamilton County, through Madison County and the community of Elwood, and connecting with Marion in Grant County will be evaluated in a corridor improvement feasibility study. SR 37 is currently a four lane arterial roadway from I-69 to northeast of Noblesville where it becomes a two lane roadway. In 1989, a joint resolution of the Indiana General Assembly urged the widening of SR 37 to four lanes from Noblesville to Marion. INDOT conducted a highway improvement feasibility study in 1990 that found widening the roadway would not be cost effective. Since the early 1990s, the rapid growth of Hamilton County has created additional traffic growth on SR 37 in the greater Indianapolis area. In the 1998 TEA-21 legislation, a feasibility study of SR 37 improvements in Noblesville, Elwood, and Marion was included as part of the Section 1602 Program for High Priority Demonstration Projects.

INDOT is conducting the SR 37 Corridor Improvement Study to: (1) Establish the essential need for improving SR 37, (2) Develop and analyze basic improvement plans ranging from the upgrade of SR 37 on its present alignment to relocation of portions or all of SR 37, and (3) Make appropriate recommendations for the programming of projects, if warranted. Due to the concerns over the economic development impacts, the evaluation of corridor improvement alternatives will include: (1) User benefits such as travel time savings, lower vehicle operating costs, and reduced accident rates, and (2) Economic impacts from improved highway access considering the expansion of existing businesses, the attraction of new businesses, and the attraction of new tourism activity.

The screening of the alternatives presented at the March 2002 public meetings is underway. At present, none of the alternatives have been eliminated from consideration. The second round of public meetings is anticipated to take place in December, 2004. At that time, a preferred alternative (or alternatives) will be presented, which may include the "no-build" alternative. The study is expected to be completed by the spring of 2005.

#### US 36 Danville Corridor Improvement Study

US 36 is the primary travel corridor connecting central and eastern Hendricks County and West-Central Indiana to Indianapolis. INDOT is conducting the US 36 Corridor Improvement Study to:

1. Establish the essential need for improving US 36
2. Develop and analyze basic improvement plans ranging from the upgrade of US 36 on its present alignment to relocation of portions or all of US 36, and
3. Make appropriate recommendations for the programming of projects.

The study has completed a draft Purpose and Need Statement as well as preliminary analysis of feasible alternatives. A public information meeting was held at the Danville Town Council Chambers on July 27, 2004. The purpose of this meeting was to present our preliminary findings in regards to proposing improvements for the US 36 Corridor.

#### Central Indiana Suburban Transportation Study

The Central Indiana Suburban Transportation Study is considering suburban mobility issues in the greater Indianapolis nine-county metropolitan area. The existing transportation problems and potential future transportation improvements are being studied from a system –level perspective, including future demand levels, interaction with other elements of the regional roadway system (i.e. I-465), relationships to I-69 / National Corridor 18 options, and opportunities to meet localized needs. This study primarily addresses the area from I-465 outward to the nine-county boundary but also considers impacts and benefits to the urban core. This process examines the interrelationship of land use and transportation decisions, the role of public transit and the appropriate hierarchy of key transportation corridors within the nine-county area. An evaluation of ITS features, access control, travel demand management and other programs to increase system efficiency is included in the study. This study also assess the regional impact of an outer beltway on the local and regional transportation system and on development patterns. The study will ensure meaningful public involvement by initially convening a group of regional constituents and then developing smaller task force groups to deal with specific areas and issues. INDOT and the Indianapolis MPO will be conducting this cooperative study of the central Indiana region. Currently, the study team is analyzing the various improvement options, and the study findings are anticipated in February, 2005.

### Anticipated Transportation Planning Corridor & Subarea Studies

The studies identified in this section are anticipated to begin in 2005 as part of the statewide plan development process. These studies were initiated to: (1) Establish the essential need for improving these corridors, (2) Develop and analyze basic improvement plans ranging from the upgrade of existing state highways on their present alignments to relocation of portions or all of these roads, and (3) Make appropriate recommendations for the programming of projects, if warranted. The evaluation of corridor improvement alternatives will include: (1) User benefits such as travel time savings, lower vehicle operating costs, and reduced accident rates, (2) Economic impacts from improved highway access considering the expansion of existing businesses, the attraction of new

businesses, and the attraction of new tourism activity, and (3) Impacts to the human and natural environments.

- US 50 Corridor Planning Study and Environmental Assessment
- This study will identify potential transportation system improvements to alleviate congested travel areas along the US 50 corridor in Dearborn County. The corridor passes through the City's of Greendale, Lawrenceburg, and Aurora, and near the Town of Dillsboro.
- US 231/State Road 46 Planning Study and Environmental Assessment
- This study will establish the need for transportation improvements on the US 231/SR 46 corridor in Owen County. The study will identify and evaluate potential improvements to alleviate congestion in the Town of Spencer.
- State Road 62 Planning Study and Environmental Assessment
- This study will analyze existing traffic conditions on SR 62 in Boonville. It will establish the need for transportation improvements on the corridor as well as identify and evaluate potential improvement options to alleviate congestion.

## Active Environmental Impact Statements

Environmental documentation is required for Federal Actions. INDOT utilizes federal funds for many projects undertaken. A large-scale project that could have a significant impact on the social, natural, and economic environment of an affected area requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). This study is conducted after, and builds upon the previously described planning studies that may have been conducted earlier in project development. The following EISs are currently underway:

### I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis EIS Tier 2

On March 24, 2004, the Federal Highway Administration issued a Record of Decision (ROD) approving a corridor for I-69 between Evansville and Indianapolis. This corridor, designated as Alternative 3C in the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for I-69, is generally 2000 feet in width, although it is wider or narrower in some places.

FHWA and INDOT are now preparing six separate Tier 2 EISs for I-69 between Evansville and Indianapolis. The Tier 2 EISs will determine the alignment, interchange locations and design characteristics of I-69 within the selected corridor, as well as develop more detailed mitigation measures. Based on the Tier 1 studies, it is anticipated that the actual right-of-way needed for I-69 will be between 240 and 470 feet wide, as compared with the 2000 foot width for the corridor.

Each of the six Tier 2 EISs will examine a section of the selected corridor. The Tier 2 sections range in length from 13 to 29 miles. The termini for the Tier 2 sections were described in the Tier 1 EIS and were approved by FHWA in the Tier 1 ROD. These termini are:

- Section 1 from I-64 (near Evansville) via the SR 57 corridor to SR 64 (near Princeton/Oakland City)
- Section 2 from SR 64 (near Princeton/Oakland City) via the SR 57 corridor to US 50 (near Washington).
- Section 3 from US 50 (near Washington) via the SR 57 corridor and cross country to US 231 (near Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center).
- Section 4 from US 231 (near Crane Naval Surface Warfare Center) via cross country to the intersection of Victor Pike Road and State Road 37 (south of Bloomington).
- Section 5 from State Road 37 just north of the intersection of Victor Pike Road (south of Bloomington) via State Road 37 to State Road 39 (Martinsville).
- Section 6 from State Road 39 (Martinsville) via State Road 37 to I-465 (Indianapolis)

Each Tier 2 EIS will proceed on its own schedule. All are scheduled for completion between late 2005 and early 2007.

#### I-69 Evansville / Henderson EIS

I-69 from the Lower Rio Grande Valley in Texas at the United States/Mexico border to the dual termini of Port Huron, Michigan and Detroit, Michigan at the United States/Canada border has been designated by Congress as a High Priority Corridor on the National Highway System. Thus, I-69 in Indiana is more than just the potential improvements from Evansville to Indianapolis and the existing roadway from Indianapolis to Michigan. INDOT, the Kentucky Transportation Cabinet, and the Evansville Urban Transportation Study are conducting this EIS which addresses I-69 south of I-64 and across the Ohio River into Kentucky. The Draft EIS was completed by the end of 2004, with the Final EIS following in early 2005.

#### US 31 Hamilton County EIS

The EIS for the US 31 corridor from Interstate 465 to SR 38 in Southern Hamilton County in the Carmel and Westfield areas is nearing completion. The Draft EIS was published. The Final EIS is expected to be completed by early 2005.

#### US 31 Kokomo / Howard County EIS

This US 31 EIS in the Kokomo / Howard County area began in early 2002. The Draft EIS is expected to be ready by early 2005. The FEIS is scheduled for publication by the spring of 2005.

#### US 31 Plymouth to South Bend EIS

This US 31 study from US 30 at Plymouth to US 20 at South Bend began in late 2001. The Draft EIS was published in 2004 and named Alternative G-E as the preferred alternative. The FEIS is currently being prepared and is expected to be ready by the end of 2004.

#### US 231 Dubois County EIS

This US 231 EIS from Interstate 64 to north of Jasper in the Huntingburg and Jasper area examined options for improving this corridor in order to reduce congestion and travel time, provided an adequate level of service for forecasted traffic volumes, enhance safety, support local community mobility needs, and accommodate regional transportation needs. The Draft EIS was published in early 2004. The Final EIS is expected to be ready by early 2005.

#### US 24 Fort Wayne to Toledo, Ohio EIS

The US 24 EIS from Interstate 469 at Fort Wayne to Interstate 475 at Toledo, Ohio is nearing completion. The Draft EIS was approved in 2003. The Final EIS is scheduled for completion in 2005. The Ohio Department of Transportation is the lead agency on this EIS.

#### US 231 West Lafayette Environmental Document

In 1987, a Draft EIS was completed for a relocation of US 231 from south of Lafayette to northwest of West Lafayette. The Final EIS was completed in 1992. The southern sections crossing the Wabash River and continuing northward on River Road opened to traffic in 2001. The middle segment from River Road to SR 26 is currently being designed. This study is preparing additional environmental documentation for the northern segment from SR 26 to US 52 west and northwest of West Lafayette and Purdue University. This study recommended that Line 7-Option 2 be adopted as the preferred alternative.

## Completed Environmental Impact Statements

Since 2000, INDOT has completed work on many Environmental Impact Statements. Some of the most significant studies have been listed below. The studies' recommendations have been incorporated into the statewide plan.

#### Indianapolis Northeast ConNECTions FEIS

The Draft EIS was completed in 2001 and the Public Hearing was held on highway and transit corridor improvements in the northeast quadrant of Marion County and Southern Hamilton County. The highway recommendations were advanced into the Final EIS published in 2003. Expanded transit alternatives will undergo further, separate study, including analyzing the need for rail transit outside and in addition to the northeast corridor from downtown Indianapolis to Noblesville. A Record of Decision was published in early 2004.



#### I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis EIS Tier 1

In response to comments after the 1996 completion of the Draft EIS on the Southwest Indiana Highway from Evansville to Bloomington, INDOT decided to expand the corridor northward to Indianapolis. This allows for a comparison of all alternatives from Evansville to Indianapolis. Fourteen route concepts were initially analyzed and nine were eliminated for consideration. The remaining five alternatives underwent additional analysis. In December of 2003, a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for I-69 was issued. The FEIS responded to the comments made on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), and added considerable information to that presented in the DEIS. The FEIS recommended Alternative 3C as the preferred corridor for I-69. The Federal Highway Administration selected Alternative 3C for I-69 in its Record of Decision (ROD) dated March 24, 2004. The ROD paved the way for the initiation of Tier 2 studies for I-69.

After the ROD was issued, INDOT began the current I-69 Evansville to Indianapolis Tier 2 Studies. In a continued effort to include the public in the transportation decision-making process, INDOT has divided the approved corridor into six sections, which are between 13 and 29 miles long. The corridor is 2,000 feet wide, and each of the six Tier 2 section study teams will determine the final alignment of the approximately 350-foot wide highway within the approved corridor.

#### SR 25 Lafayette to Logansport EIS

The State Road 25 (SR 25) Hoosier Heartland project is nearing the end of the environmental study stage of development. The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was published in August 2002 with three public hearings held along the corridor in October of that year. Public and participating agency comments on the DEIS were addressed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). On January 22, 2003, the late Governor Frank O'Bannon announced Alternative 2 as the preferred alternative for the Hoosier Heartland Highway between Logansport and Lafayette. The recommendation was based on the alternative's ability to meet the project's purpose and need, environmental design considerations, and input received during the public comment period. The FEIS was approved by the Indiana Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration on November 10, 2004.

#### Ohio River Bridges EIS

The Ohio River Bridges Project addresses the long term cross-river transportation needs in the Louisville-Southern Indiana region. A Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) was published in November 2001 analyzing nine specific bridge locations in one and two-bridge combinations. Public hearings were held in Indiana and Kentucky, and more than 5,000 comments were received on the DEIS.

A Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was issued in April, 2003. This document identified the preferred alternative, responded to comments on the DEIS, and included a plan to minimize impacts to historic properties and other resources. The commitments are legally binding. They were developed in consultation with community representatives who will stay involved and monitor work to help ensure commitments are fulfilled.

After a detailed analysis that included extensive public outreach and involvement, The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) authorized the project in September 2003, in a Record of Decision.

The project is comprised of a new downtown bridge immediately upstream from the Kennedy Bridge (I-65); an east end bridge about eight miles from downtown, connecting the Gene Snyder Freeway (Ky. 841) to the Lee Hamilton Highway (S.R. 265); and a rebuild to the south of the Kennedy Interchange where I-64, I-65 and I-71 converge in downtown Louisville.

#### US 231 West Lafayette Environmental Document

In 1987, a Draft EIS was completed for a relocation of US 231 from south of Lafayette to northwest of West Lafayette. The Final EIS was completed in 1992. The southern sections crossing the Wabash River and continuing northward on River Road opened to traffic in 2001. The middle segment from River Road to SR 26 is currently being designed. This study is preparing additional environmental documentation for the northern segment from SR 26 to US 52 west and northwest of West Lafayette and Purdue University in order to address concerns that recent development may have significantly a. The findings will determine whether a Supplemental EIS is needed. This study began in 2001 recommended that Line 7-Option 2 be adopted as the preferred alternative.

## Summary

The key element in making the transition from the system planning activities to the project development/programming process is the corridor planning process. This chapter outlined the corridor planning studies undertaken and anticipated to be conducted by INDOT as part of the statewide plan development process. These studies included the Major Corridor Investment Studies involving commerce corridors, several segments of US 31, the Ohio River, Northwest Indiana, and I-69 in Fort Wayne. Other corridor studies included US 31 from Indianapolis to South Bend, SR 25 from Lafayette to Logansport, Indianapolis Northeast ConNECTions MIS/DEIS, US 231 in Dubois County, and the Interstate Interchange Study.

Many of the projects in the Chapter 11 listing were derived from the corridor planning studies discussed in this chapter. Moreover, a major part of the task of INDOT's Long Range Transportation Planning Section is to complete corridor planning studies. The planners not only develop the Long Range Plan, but they also complete much of the work that goes into the development of the Long Range Plan.